

Billy Elliot

For a miner's son growing up in the North of England during the strike of '84, life was tough, but for eleven-year-old Billy, one chance meeting would change the rest of his life.

I- the North of England

Open the page :

(right button -> open in a new frame)

http://www.northumbria-tourist-board.org.uk/home_v4.htm

The city of Durham is in a region of England which includes four counties.

1. What is the name of this region ?

(CLICK ON THE MAP)

2. In what county is Durham City ?
3. Name the three other counties.
4. What archaeological remains of Roman times runs across the region ?

(CLICK ON THE MAP TO OPEN **DURHAM** SECTION, and follow the link to “**The historic City of Durham**”)

5. How old are the Cathedral and the Castle ? Who built them ?
6. The Cathedral is said to be “half a castle”. Against what people ?
7. Why is Durham University famous in England ?

(Follow the link to “**Tourism Section**”, then to “**Places to visit**”, then to “**Industrial Heritage**”)

8. Why is “Causey Arch” a special place in Europe ?
9. Killhope mine is typical of a mining industry that flourished in Northumbria in the 19th century. What kind of ore was extracted there ? When was it closed ?
10. What other mining industry was there in the area in the 18th century ?
11. Why is Tanfield Railway a place of outstanding historical importance ?

Open the page :

(right button -> open in a new frame)

[BRITAIN](#) AND TOURIST...

12. What are the main products of County Durham nowadays ?
13. What area of the county is still the most industrialized ?

...during the strike of '84

II- the strike of '84

Open the page :

(right button -> open in a new frame)

<http://www.terryblythe.co.uk/page70.html>

14. How long did the miners' strike last ?
15. What were the miners striking against ?
16. What Union led the strike ?
17. Was the strike a success ? Why ?

Proud of his fancy footwork in the boxing ring at the local village hall, young Billy's eye is caught by the unscheduled invasion of Mrs. Wilkinson's ballet school. Her usual classroom has been taken over as soup kitchen for striking miners.

III- Miners

Open the page :

(right button -> open in a new frame)

18. What is the usual name for "a coal mine" ? When were they nationalized ? (COLLIERIES)

Open the page :

(right button -> open in a new frame)

<http://www.rjb.co.uk/doccase.htm>

Find information and data on the British Coal Industry :

19. What is the total number of people who are employed by the coal industry ?
- 20.

At the end of his boxing lesson George (the coach), orders Billy to stay behind to hand over the keys to the local ballet teacher, Mrs. Wilkinson.

IV- ballet

<http://encarta.msn.com/index/conciseindex/ab/0abaa000.htm?z=1&pg=2&br=1>

http://www.royal-ballet-school.org.uk/Courses/Lower_School.htm

http://www.royal-ballet-school.org.uk/Applications_Auditions/applications.htm Royal Ballet School

Miscellaneous information around the film “Billy Elliot”

<http://www.terryblythe.co.uk/page70.html>

the 184 miners’ strike

<http://histclo.hispeed.com/the/movie/b/me-be.html>

boys’ historical clothing

http://www.dur.ac.uk/~dla0www/c_tour/tour.html

durham cathedral & castle

<http://www.durhamcity.gov.uk/>

durham city council

http://www.northumbria-tourist-board.org.uk/home_v4.htm

northumbria map

http://news.bbc.co.uk/hi/english/uk/newsid_278000/278468.stm

BBC : moderate miners to strike

http://news.bbc.co.uk/hi/english/business/the_economy/newsid_182000/182153.stm

boardroom blues 48hrs

http://news.bbc.co.uk/olmedia/180000/video/_182153_bartlett_vi.ram

real a : new working time directive

<http://www.durham.gov.uk/durhamcc/usp.nsf/web/pages/about+killhope>

Pennine lead mine

http://news.bbc.co.uk/hi/english/uk/wales/newsid_448000/448654.stm

wales coal controversy

http://news.bbc.co.uk/olmedia/445000/video/_448654_merthyr_vi.ram

real audio : coal controversy opencast

<http://www.thirdstory.com/thirtysomething/players.htm>

(<http://www.billyelliott.net/>

poster of the film,

the story :)

<http://www.rjb.co.uk/doccase.htm> RJB : data & information on coal & energy

<http://www.readman.freemove.co.uk/index.htm> Blackhall (Co Durham) Colliery website

<http://www.backworth.org.uk/index.html> Backworth Colliery Band

A summary from the official site :

As Billy weaves his way through the throng of ballerinas, he becomes lost in their movements. Debbie, one of the young ballerinas, challenges Billy to try out the exercises and not to back down; he tags on to the back of the class, surprising the somewhat jaded teacher. Pulling him aside, Mrs. Wilkinson (who happens to be Debbie's mother) tells Billy to replace his boots with a pair of ballet shoes if he's to join in.

As the music and class take form, something in Billy's determination, his poise and natural flair ignites Mrs. Wilkinson's flagging passion for her dance classes. Carried away, she ignores the rest of the group and concentrates on Billy. Meanwhile at home, Billy's father and older brother, Tony are out on strike and spend most of their day on a picket line. Out of work and out of pocket, they're barely able to buy food or heat the house.

Further more, Grandma's memory worsens; when Billy takes her to visit his Mam's grave, Grandma wanders off to stare blankly at the wrong plot. Billy tries to keep his interest in ballet a secret, from everyone but his best friend Michael.

When Billy's Dad realises that he's skipping boxing lessons and spending their money on less than manly pursuits, he storms into Mrs. Wilkinson's dance class to extract his son, banning him forever from dancing and boxing. From now onwards he has to stay at home and look after his gran.